

PATIENT INFORMATION

Children's oral drug challenge :

Information for parents / carers

Your child has been invited to come to the Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit (SSPAU) for a drug challenge: these are performed in hospital as it is the safest way of finding out if your child reacts to a drug.

Stopping antihistamine treatment before the challenge

This is so we can get a reliable result. Long-acting antihistamines, including Cetirizine, Loratadine and Fexofenadine to be stopped 5 days before the challenge
Short-acting antihistamines, including Chlorphenamine to be stopped 2 days before challenge.

Some cough medicines also contain antihistamine. Please read medicine leaflet, and if you are unsure, contact SSPAU for advice.

Eczema creams, asthma medication and nasal sprays are okay and should be continued.

Drug to be challenged:

My child is unwell

We will only perform the challenge if your child is well enough on the day.

We won't perform a challenge if they have a tummy bug, have a temperature in the last 24-48 hours or if they are wheezy or have bad hay fever.

Please contact SSPAU on 01803 655492 to let us know if your child is unwell so that we can rearrange the appointment.

What should I do to prepare my child for the drug challenge?

Preparing your child for their visit to hospital will help them to understand what is happening and can improve your child's willingness to co-operate. Talking to your child in advance will give them time to ask any questions or voice any concerns they may have. Use familiar words that your child will understand and give truthful, factual information.

On the day of the drug challenge

Your child should have a light breakfast that day. When you arrive, you will have the opportunity to ask questions, and you will be asked to sign a consent form. We try to involve the child as fully as possible in this process. Before the drug challenge is started, your child will be examined and state of their general health recorded.

Your child will be given increasing doses of the drug at timed intervals until they have 1 dose appropriate to their age and weight. Throughout the challenge, a specially trained nurse will carefully monitor your child. Your child must stay on the ward during the challenge and for at least two hours after the challenge has stopped. It can last up to five hours but can be all day if your child is unwell during the challenge.

We cannot provide a lunch on the SSPAU so do bring a packed lunch for when the challenge is completed.

What are the risks?

Drug challenges can cause an allergic reaction, most involving the eyes, nose, mouth, skin and gut. Anaphylaxis is a more severe form of allergic reaction and can involve the air way, breathing or circulation. Anaphylaxis is unusual during a drug challenge; however, we have medication on the ward to be given in this situation. You will stay on the ward until your child has fully recovered, this may be overnight.

Useful Allergy Information Websites

<https://www.allergyuk.org/>

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>

<https://www.theallergyteam.com/>

<https://allergylifestyle.com/>

<https://www.epipen.co.uk>

<https://www.eczema.org/>

For more information contact:

Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit Telephone: 01803 655492 Monday—Friday
08:30-21:00

Or alternatively call the

Specialist Nurse Support Worker on 01803 655834 Monday-Friday 09:00-17:00

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.